

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (previously presented) A seamless tubular food casing comprising at least one copolymer comprising units of vinylpyrrolidone and units of at least one comonomer, said comonomer being selected from the group consisting of vinyl alkanoate, vinyl alkyl ether, conjugated alkadiene, acrylamide and α,β -ethylenically unsaturated carboxylic acid, said copolymer being in admixture with cellulose hydrate.
2. (previously presented) A food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the weight ratio of said copolymer to cellulose is from 1:25 to 10:1.
3. (previously presented) A food casing as claimed in claim 1, where in the weight ratio of said copolymer is from 1:15 to 5:1.
4. (previously presented) A food casing as claimed in claim 1, where in the weight ratio of said copolymer is from 1:4 to 4:1.
5. (canceled)
6. (previously presented) A food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the proportion of comonomer units is less than 50 mol%, based on the sum of all monomer and comonomer units in said copolymer.

7. (previously presented) A food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the proportion of comonomer units is less than 30 mol%, based on the sum of all monomer and comonomer units in said copolymer.
8. (original) A food casing as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a fiber reinforcement.
9. (original) A food casing as claimed in claim 8, wherein the fiber reinforcement comprises a hemp fiber paper.
10. (canceled)
11. (currently amended) A food casing as claimed in claim ~~[[10]]~~8, wherein the copolymer in admixture with said cellulose hydrate comprises a layer on the outside of the fiber reinforcement.
12. (previously presented) A food casing as claimed in claim 1, wherein the copolymer is present in an amount sufficient to inhibit or suppress mold growth.
13. (previously presented) A food casing as claimed in claim 1 having a length from 5 to 100 m and said casing is shirred to form a shirred stick.
14. (canceled)
15. (original) An artificial sausage casing comprising a food casing as claimed in claim 1.
16. (previously presented) A sausage comprising a food casing as claimed in claim 1.

17. (previously presented) A shirred stick comprising a food casing according to claim 1.
18. (currently amended) A food casing comprising ~~cellulose and an additive in admixture with cellulose hydrate~~, wherein the additive comprises a copolymer comprising units of vinylpyrrolidone and units of at least one comonomer, said comonomer being selected from the group consisting of vinyl alkanoate, vinyl alkyl ether, conjugated alkadiene, acrylamide and α,β -ethylenically unsaturated carboxylic acid, and wherein the presence of said additive is in amount sufficient to achieve one or more of the following as compared to a food casing comprising cellulose without said additive:
 - (i) lower permeation while water vapor permeability is preserved,
 - (ii) reduced susceptibility to cellulase and increased resistance to mold, or
 - (iii) a greater affinity of said casing to sausage-meat emulsion.
19. (canceled)